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Renew the Study of Our Lutheran Confessions.*

In the Church the Word of God and its study takes precedence of everything else. Our Lutheran Church, as the Church of the Word of God (in its origin), has emphasized that as its chief principle. No testimony ranks with the Word. In this article that foundation lies as fundamental and changeless, — I deem it supreme.

But — the confession to that Word ranks next both in the teaching of our Church and in her articles of organization. In her creed the Church witnesses of her faith in the Word. So our pastors are pledged on the Word and the Confessions. Members are received as confessors of Scripture and the Confessions. In all disputes we test the teaching by the Word, as the norm, and our creeds as our Church's standard of witness.

Of all teaching, therefore, not directly Scripture-text the Confessions (or creeds) have first rank. No individual teacher's ideas, however prominent, dare cloud the shining testimony of the Confessions. We Lutherans are creedal confessors of the Word. In the creeds it is the Church as a totality that has spoken and speaks. "We believe, teach, and confess," is a phrase oft recurring in the last of the Lutheran Confessions, the Formula of Concord.

As a pastor or a professor of theology or a church writer, what I have to say must stand the test of Scripture and the witnesses to Scripture, the Confessions. Such is the position and the manifest publication of our Church in all her documents of an official nature, in her constitutions, in her formulas of installation into sacred offices, and in her liturgies.

It is a sinister fact that this sense has weakened. In the great breaking up of the Reformation Church now going on in the world we see her Confessions brutally violated, torn to shreds, neglected

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by clergy and people. No doubt an honest expression of an inner state — she has not much to confess in large reaches. She lacks the witness conviction to the truth manywhere. When Luther and the other Reformers confessed their faith in our great creeds, there was in them the God-born faith in the Word which impelled them to testify. To-day each theologian of the Reformation Church, each preacher, and each leader in wide realms often stands for himself. In place of the glorious unity of the Confessions we have the strident disharmony of pure individualism. Each one grabs a little fragment of the Bible which he desires and then magnifies it out of proportion to the truth. Certainty causes a severe problem. Uncertainty is the key-note of the hour.

The study of our Lutheran Confessions has come to be an urgent necessity. Next to the study of the Bible it stands as pre-eminent in all doctrinal studies. The best churchman, doctrinally, is the man who is well at home in the Word and in the Confessions and can testify to a deep spiritual experience of both.

Our clergymen especially will be poorly fitted to give the souls entrusted to them a proper insight into the Word if they become ignorant of the Church's faith. They will be experimenters, whom we cannot trust, whose witness the Church will fail to accept with that magnificent quietude of conviction which the confessional spirit creates when born of the Word. And we need at least a few leading laymen who are familiar with the Confessions of our dear Reformation Church, — men who can prove and test, who can raise their voices for a witness to the truth and, if need be, for an intelligent critique and protest doctrinally. A renewal of the study of our Lutheran Confessions in connection with the Word of God, — what a change in the lax, flabby, convictionless trend among us that would aid in effecting! The terrible doctrinal crisis our poor, stricken Reformation Church in Europe is undergoing warns us in America of imminent dangers threatening us. Back to the Scriptures and to the Confessions! — that is the cry our Lutheran Church should heed.

Pure doctrine, which means also a living doctrine, and pure life in faith and love are the two poles of the Church's existence spiritually. Where the Word is loved in its purity and where a life born of faith is sustained by the Holy Spirit, there the power-reservoirs for soul-saving activity are at hand. Where the confessional status is low, unity is broken, false teaching cannot be distinguished from pure doctrine because of a weak-eyed vision, and there the mission spirit will not flourish long.

How do our still clear-eyed pastors and mature laymen expect to meet these needs? That is the point which this little article desires to urge. How true to the Confessions were our Synod's pioneer pastors! And it was the Augustana Synod which in the old General Council days stood as a monitor with regard to the confessional spirit. Where are we now?

At least let us inquire while we have treasures left.

Arianism.

A Short Account of the Heresy, from Its Rise to Its Overthrow at Nicaea, A. D. 325.

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(If the interested reader has access to a large library, he is referred for original authorities to the first three volumes of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, containing the works of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomenus, Athanasius, Rufinus, and Theodoret; if not, he can easily get valuable information and interesting reading on the subject, as well as on Athanasius and Constantine, in Dean Stanley's *Lectures on the Eastern Church*, Everyman's Library, No. 251, cloth binding, 80 cents.)

I. From the Rise of the Heresy to the Nicene Council.

The last and most violent of the persecutions had just come to an end. When Diocletian saw that he could not kill off all the Christians, that the more he persecuted them, the more they increased, and that members of his own household turned Christian, he gave to the world the first example of a Roman emperor voluntarily resigning the purple. His partner in government, Maximianus, solicited him to reassume the reins of government, but Diocletian wisely rejected the temptation with a smile of pity, pointing to the cabbages which he had raised, and calmly observed that he should no longer be urged to relinquish the enjoyment of happiness to the pursuit of power. Maximianus followed suit. Persecutions continued, civil wars followed, and they ended with the victory of Constantine at Rome.

With the conversion of Constantine a new era began, not only in the history of the Church and the Roman Empire, but in the history of the world. History styles him Constantine the Great. And he was great, not for what he was, but for what he did. Hardly a character in history has been so variously judged. What one writer says in his praise another says in denunciation of him. We are advised to believe both. His life was a mingling of light and shadow. He surely was no saint. But why judge him as a saint? Judge him as an emperor, as a man. He was the greatest

opportunist of all the twenty centuries of the Christian era. Recognizing the irresistible strength of Christianity, he resolved to enlist it in his service. A little more than a year after his conversion he caused the Edict of Universal Toleration to be published at Milan, A. D. 313. But, as Constantine soon learned, it was one thing to tolerate, protect, and embrace the Christian faith and another thing to give it peace.

Let us turn our eyes to the traditional see of St. Mark's, Alexandria, Egypt. After Bishop Peter had suffered martyrdom under Diocletian, Achilles was installed in the episcopal office, whom Alexander succeeded during the period of peace. One day, while he was entertaining a number of clergymen in a tower overlooking the vast expanse of the Mediterranean Sea, a number of boys were playing at baptism on the sandy shore. Alexander sent out his attendant to round up the boys and bring them in. The boys at first denied, and then confessed, that they had selected a bishop, who, after duly making the proper addresses and asking the proper questions, had led them to the water and dipped them in. This little boy, a bright and lively chap, was Athanasius. When Alexander learned that the proper forms had been used, he passed on the validity of the sacred act and determined to make a real bishop out of the boy, taking him into his house. From this incident arose the connection of Athanasius with the aged Alexander, who ordered that the playmates be educated for the Church, especially Athanasius, who was ordained as his archdeacon as soon as he had become of age.

While Athanasius was still a youth at Alexandria, he became acquainted with a heresy which he was destined to oppose as the champion of orthodoxy all his life. It seems that Alexander was accustomed, whether for the instruction of his clergy or the display of his own powers, to debate in public solemn questions on the nature of God; or in the words of Socrates: "He attempted one day in the presence of the presbytery and the rest of his clergy to explain, with perhaps too philosophical minuteness, that great theological mystery — the *UNITY of the Holy Trinity.* One of the presbyters under his jurisdiction, whose name was Arius, possessed of no inconsiderable logical acumen, imagining that the bishop was subtly teaching the same view of this subject as Sabellius, the Libyan, from love of controversy, championed the opposite opinion, advancing another error, which was diametrically opposed to that which he supposed himself to be called upon to refute. 'If,' said he, 'the Father begat the Son, He that was begotten had

a beginning of existence; and from this it is evident that there was [a time] when the Son was not.'" Let us note that the heresy did not break out by a positive teaching of heresy on the part of a heretic, but by one who turned heretical, claiming orthodox teaching to be heresy. "And thus from a little spark a large fire was kindled." But it was no little spark. It was rather a slumbering coal, glowing for ages and ready to burst into flame. For who was Arius? At the time when the controversy broke out, he was already an old man. Granted that he was ambitious and jealous, as some authorities state, he certainly did not invent the heresy of the Arians. His name has become connected with Arianism not on account of his personality, but on account of the controversy which he provoked. While it would lead us too far away from our course to examine the origin of the heresy, we shall briefly state that the river is Unbelief and that the two main branches are Judaism and Rationalism. These two branches met at Antioch during the time of Zenobia, the famous Queen of the East. If she was not a Jewess, she at least favored the Jews. And she was also the patroness of the Bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata. One of the followers of this Paul was the martyr Lucian, the founder of the famous theological school, rather rationalistic school of philosophy, at Antioch. Now, it is evident why the Jews were the ancient enemies of the divinity of Christ. It is also apparent why the sophists of Antioch rejected the divinity of Christ. Their strong points were argument and reason. But the divinity of Christ must be *believed,* and faith and reason do not agree. Instead of believing, they argued. Arius, Eusebius, and others were graduates of this school at Antioch. "Be mindful of our adversity, thou faithful comrade of Lucian's school," Arius afterwards appealed to Eusebius. And to these two branches later another branch was added, the Eunuchs, the powerful political party in the courts of the Constantines.

Concerning the person of Arius, it is said that he was tall and thin, a mortified exterior concealing unmeasured ambition; he was subtle, ingenious, and persuasive in conversation, calculated to attract, especially women. At one time Bishop Alexander had held him in high repute; he was even accused of being slow in taking action at the outbreak of the controversy. But before long he armed himself with all the terrors of his power, gave public evidence of his indignation against the blasphemies which he had endured, and excommunicated Arius and his followers.

But this did not settle matters. Arius was not without ad-

herents, even outside of Alexandria. In Egypt he had the support of the Melitian faction and the sympathy of the Jews and Gentiles. And there were the powerful rival dioceses of the East. Other bishops like him had also passed through the school of rationalism in Antioch, and they would not let him fall without a struggle. The reputation of the school was at stake!

Caesarea was the first place to offer him a retreat, where he received a cordial reception from the learned Eusebius, the historian. Of course, Alexander, too, was active. He addressed a circular letter to all the bishops of the Church, wherein he set forth the heresy of Arius and warned them not to receive the excommunicated as brethren. A number of bishops promptly answered the call by opposing the schismatics. But in the mean while a powerful champion had come forward and declared himself in his favor, Eusebius of Nicomedia, the ecclesiastical adviser of Constantia, Constantine's sister. Eusebius, probably a brother of his namesake of Caesarea, offered him a refuge, which he gladly accepted on account of the growing unpopularity which attended him in Palestine after the publication of Alexander's letter. Supported by so powerful a prelate near the emperor, Arius could no longer be considered an outcast.

The controversy even reached the ears of Constantine. After the death of his brother-in-law Licinius he had become the sole and undisputed master of the vast Roman Empire. He was now at liberty to direct his attention to the entire empire. He at once saw how dangerous a divided Church might prove to unity of the empire. He wrote a letter and sent it with Hosius, his Western ecclesiastical adviser and guiding saint, to Alexandria. He advised both parties to maintain silence and not to prate on unimportant subjects in vain controversies. But this well-meaning attempt at reconciliation only betrayed Constantine's ignorance of the seriousness of the matter in question. Of course, it came to naught. And since Constantine had his mind set on peace, and since there were a few other questions which had troubled the Church, he resolved to summon all the heads of the various Christian communities throughout the empire to meet in a general council for the purpose of restoring unity in the Church just as he had restored unity in the empire.

II. The Nicene Council.

The Nicene Council, — one of the decisive battles in ecclesiastical history! It is the first of a long series of councils which have since been termed ecumenical. In describing it, let us ask

the same questions that we would ask in speaking of great battles fought in military history. Why was it held? It was for the purpose of establishing peace in a Church disrupted by reason of the Arian heresy, which had come upon the stage at Alexandria. Let us not forget the issue, the real point of controversy. The question at issue did not concern the Trinity. The doctrine of three persons and a divine nature of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was freely admitted by all. To each of these distinct and separate beings both parties ascribed the attributes of the Godhead, with the exception of eternal *self-existence,* which the Arians restricted to the Father. Both admitted the antemundane existence of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. But, according to the Arians, there was a *when,* before the creation of the world, before time itself, when the Parent Deity dwelt in undivided, undeveloped Unity. At this *when,* in eternity, inconceivably remote, the Majestic Solitude ceased, the Divine Unity was broken, namely, by an act of the Sovereign Will, and the only-begotten Son, the Logos, the intermediate Agent of subsequent creation, *began to be.* The whole mode of argument was rationalistic throughout. "If so," that is, if Christ is God just like the Father, "then call Him no more the Father's Son, but His Brother." Their arguments fastened themselves upon *our* conceptions of the words father — son, born — unborn, begotten — unbegotten, create — uncreate, etc.; for instance, in Arius's *Thalia*: "God was not always Father; once He was not Father; afterwards He became Father." What surprises us is the immense interest taken in what one would otherwise call an abstract subject. "The whole world turned Ariomaniac." Sailors, millers, travelers, and tradesmen sang Arius's songs about the disputed doctrines. "Ask a man, 'How many oboli does it cost?' and the answer is a harangue on the generated and ungenerated being." "Go into the barber-shop or ask whether the water is hot and the bath is ready, and you are told that the Son rose out of nothing."

The place where the council was held was Nicaea, not far from the present city of Constantinople, on the Asiatic side, the modern village Isnik. Constantinople had not yet been founded. Nicaea was the second capital of Bithynia, not far from Nicomedia, the summer-home of the emperors since Diocletian. The meeting-place was a basilica, the usual Roman public government building, usually located in the center of the city, at the intersection of the four principal streets. The year given is the year 325. But the month and the days are difficult to ascertain. The shortest probable time between the opening and the close of the council is

generally given as from May 20 to July 25, whereas according to some traditions it lasted from three to six years. It was an enormous crowd that gathered together, and still it was far smaller than the number that assembled at the later councils. The highest number fixes the entire assembly at about two thousand, which, probably, is correct. And the actual number of bishops is variously stated, but the number 318 is generally given and is also probably correct.

Let us endeavor to get acquainted with a number of the bishops present. First to be mentioned is the aged *Alexander of Alexandria,* whose imprudent "too philosophical minuteness" had provoked the quarrel. Close beside him is a small young man, of lively manners and speech. Though only a deacon, he was destined to succeed Alexander in Alexandria. Already he is taking the words out of his bishop's mouth. He is even now behind the scenes, making deadly enemies for himself, who will remain such all the days of his life. That small, insignificant-looking deacon is the great *Athanasius.* He was great in life, but he became still greater after his death. He became so great in the following centuries that there was a saying in circulation: "If you meet with a saying of Athanasius, write it down on the spot. If you have no paper at hand, tear off a piece of your shirt." Next in line is a tall man. He would be handsome but for the deadly pallor on his face. At times his limbs tremble, as if suffering from some internal complaint, the same perhaps that will some day suddenly terminate his life in a frightful death in that public toilet at Constantinople. This strange, captivating giant is the heretic *Arius.* From the interior of Egypt came two remarkable deputies. One was *Potammon,* of the Upper Nile, and the other *Paphnutius,* of the Upper Thebaid. Both had suffered in the late persecutions. Each of them bore the frightful spectacle of the right eye dug out, and Paphnutius, besides, came limping on one leg. The name of Paphnutius ought to be remembered. When the proposition was made in the council enjoining all clergy to celibacy, it was Paphnutius who roared into the assembly: "Lay not this heavy yoke on the clergy. Marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled." The first in dignity of the Syrian deputies was the orthodox *Eustathius,* of Antioch. This worthy man had suffered in heathen persecutions and was destined to suffer also in the Arian persecutions. Next in rank and far more illustrious was *Eusebius of Caesarea.* We honor him as the father of church history. But to the bishops of Nicaea his presence awakened feelings of another

kind. Our sympathies go out to him after reading his letter to his congregation at Caesarea. But Athanasius and Potammon, who knew him better, were of a different mind. Athanasius was convinced that he was an Arian at heart. And Pôtammon watched him for any slip he might make. Of the Syrian bishops another one ought to be mentioned, not on account of himself, but on account of the see he occupied, *Macarius of Jerusalem,* which at that time was not much more than a Roman camp. From Asia Minor came *Eusebius of Nicomedia,* afterwards of Constantinople. If there ever was a politician, here was one. Although formerly a favorite of Constantine's rival, Licinius, he afterwards gained such influence over the Constantine family that he caused the whole world for a time to turn Arian. The Bishop of Constantinople, Metrophanes, could not come, but he sent his presbyter, Alexander. And with him was a little boy, *Paul,* the secretary of Metrophanes, who was destined to suffer and to play a part in the orthodox party of Constantinople. Besides the regular champions the orthodox had a number of eccentric bishops on their side. The first is *Acesius,* the Novatian. He was a little "too orthodox." Constantine called him into his presence and asked him why he kept aloof from others if he was of the same faith with them. Acesius argued that such as fell into sin after their baptism were unworthy of Holy Communion. Constantine replied: "Ho, ho, Acesius! Plant a ladder and climb up into heaven by yourself!" But what interests us most about Acesius is not his bigotry, but another little boy whom he had with him, *Auxanon,* who lived to a great age and from whom afterwards, as an eye-witness, Socrates drew much information for his history. Another one of the eccentric orthodox champions was *Marcellus,* of Ancyra, the fiercest opponent of Arius, who, when Athanasius was not present, seems to have put forth the chief arguments against the Arians. If we may judge from his subsequent history, Athanasius was never quite at ease in leaving the controversy in his hands. Marcellus was one of those awkward men who cannot avoid one ditch without falling into another. He could not attack Arianism without falling into Sabellianism, exactly what the Arians claimed. He was afterwards deposed and restored, deposed and restored. Once Athanasius himself had to depose him. But what interests us most about this blundering Marcellus is that we owe to him the present form of our Apostles' Creed. For the purpose of vindicating his orthodoxy he sent it to Bishop Julius of Rome. — Of the legendary characters may be mentioned *Spyridion,* of Cyprus, of whom interesting

stories are told, and *Nicolaus,* of Myra, who developed into our present "Santa Claus." It is doubtful whether this latter bishop ever existed; yet in the traditional pictures he figures as the most prominent of them all. With his white hair, flowing beard, and red face he could plainly be seen at the moment when the *Thalia* of Arius were read, in righteous indignation assailing the heretic Arius with a tremendous box on the ear! Even a Teutonic countryman was present, *Theophilus, the Goth,* the teacher of Ulfilas. The Bishop of Rome, not yet Pope, could not come. He sent two presbyters, *Victor* and *Vincentius.* Let us look at the chairman, the most famous of all, *Hosius,* of Cordova. All following Roman history makers claim that he represented the Pope. This is a fake. He had still thirty years of life to run, yet he was already venerable with age and suffering. Athanasius calls him that "Abrahamic old man, well called Hosius the Holy." It is to be doubted whether in his own age there was one of still higher authority in the theological world. But since he left no writings behind, his was one of those brilliant reputations which die with the life of the holder while the reputation of Athanasius grew and grew.

Having assembled the bishops, let us open the council. Socrates and Sozomenus tell us some interesting stories; they say, that while the bishops arrived, preliminary discussions were held, in which more than one theological knight tried his skill and broke a lance. The precise date of the formal opening must be left in doubt; probably it was the 20th of May. Constantine arrived with high hopes of establishing peace. But he soon met with an unpleasant surprise. No sooner had he arrived and taken quarters than he was overwhelmed with a large number of parchment rolls, containing accusations and complaints of the assembled bishops against one another. This was a poor omen for the unanimity which he had so much at heart. But silence! On the morrow the council was to open and begin its work in earnest!

Not a voice was to be heard, silence reigned supreme. A signal was given which told everybody that the emperor was approaching the place of meeting. Just think of it — a Roman emperor! Formerly, when Christians beheld the face of the emperor, it usually was to take a last look at an earthly ruler before entering the realms of the heavenly King. The whole assembly arises and stands on its feet. Constantine enters — a man of towering stature and strong frame, with broad shoulders and thick neck, dressed in a purple robe, and his feet encased in red slippers. He enters — and blushes. However imperfect Constantine's religion may have

been otherwise, this blush was, at least, far more innocent than the "blush of Sigismund" at Constance, more than a thousand years later, a blush which was remembered at Worms a century after. Eusebius of Caesarea arose and made a speech in metrical prose. Constantine arose and made a speech in Latin, which was immediately translated into Greek; it was an appeal for unity and peace in the Church as he had established military peace in the empire.

The council was now formally opened, and the floodgates of debate were opened wide. Recriminations and accusations bandied to and fro in utter disregard of the august imperial presence. But Constantine remained unmoved in the midst of the clatter of angry voices. He was a Roman. He even condescended to lay aside his stately Latin and to address the partisans in Greek. He then produced from the folds of his mantle the mutual complaints and ordered them burned unread.

We have no continuous account of the theological discussion which followed. It seems that the Arian minority must have had reasons to entertain hopes of victory. Probably their overconfidence was their ruin. Arius had no seat in the assembly, but he was frequently called upon to express his opinions. And in such a case he was usually confronted by Athanasius. It was in one of these disputes that the songs which Arius had written under the name of *Thalia* were introduced.

Eighteen extreme Arians submitted a creed the contents of which are not given; but it was received with tumultuous disapproval and torn up on the spot.

A solution of the difficulty was sought in the production of a creed which had existed before the controversy and to which all parties could agree. This was proposed by Eusebius of Caesarea. But this would have been avoiding the issue. The Fathers did not meet in order to compromise, but to settle a dispute. Eusebius produced a creed which had been used in the Church of Palestine since ancient times. And it was a good one. We recognize at once the basis of the present Nicene Creed. The emperor approved of it. The Arian minority was willing to adopt it. But in the eyes of the orthodox this very fact offered a fatal difficulty. They were determined to find some form of words, entirely covering the disputed question, to which no Arian could possibly subscribe. Other words had been tried to describe the divinity of Christ: "God," "Image," "Power," "Light," but it was found that some interpretation was put on them which eluded the desired meaning. And so they were determined to use a word which no Arian could accept.

This may sound harsh. But it was the only thing that could have been done to hammer down the truth of Christ's divinity without compromise and ambiguity.

The creed of Eusebius was as follows: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only-begotten Son, born before all creation, begotten of God the Father before all ages, by whom also all things were made; who on account of our salvation became incarnate and lived among men; and who suffered and died and rose again on the third day and ascended to the Father and shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. We believe also in the Holy Spirit. We believe in the subsistence and existence of each of these [persons]: that the Father is truly Father, the Son truly Son, and the Holy Spirit truly Holy Spirit; even as our Lord also, when He sent forth His disciples to preach the Gospel, said, 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'"

What is wrong with this creed? There is nothing wrong with it — except that all the words used: "God," "God of God," "only-begotten Son," "before all ages," "truly Son," admitted of Arian interpretations and were actually interpreted so as to elude the desired meaning. Outside of that, this creed of Eusebius is a wonderful confession.

But a solution of the difficulty was found. A letter was produced from Eusebius of Nicomedia in which he declared that to assert that the Son was of one substance with the Father was a proposition evidently absurd. This letter produced a violent excitement. There was the very test of which they were in search. The letter was torn to pieces, and the phrase which Eusebius had pledged himself to reject became the phrase which *they* pledged themselves to adopt.

Now, this phrase was not unknown. It was one of those remarkable words which creep into the language and then suddenly take a permanent hold on the minds of men. There are other such words; for instance, "Justification," *"Gnadenwahl,"* "Grace," "Atonement." There is an interest attached to the birth, sense, use, and dominion of these words. So also with the word *homoousion.* It was born in heresy. Paul of Samosata was condemned for the use of it. He used it in the wrong, Sabellian, sense, denying the *Three in One,* the Trinity. Here it is used as a test of orthodoxy, confessing the divinity of Christ.

When the word *homoousion* was proposed by the council as a test of orthodoxy, a torrent of invectives was poured out by the Arians. It was, they maintained, unscriptural, materialistic, heretical, Montanistic, Sabellian. It denied a separate existence of the Son. It implied a physical cohesion of the various parts of the Godhead. But Athanasius and his friends replied that, though the word was not found in Scripture, at least the idea was Scriptural, and that it is found in compound words, such as *periousios, epiousios,* and the like. If it was condemned when used by heretics, it was condemned because it was used by them in another sense. If the acceptance of it seemed to savor of Sabellianism, the rejection of it plainly involved a return to polytheism and paganism.

The 19th of June was the date affixed to the Nicene Creed in the copies for the Council of Chalcedon. Following is the original Creed of Nicaea as given by the ecclesiastical historian Socrates: —

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible; — and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God and Light of Light; begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; by whom all things were made, both which are in heaven and on earth; who for the sake of us men and on account of our salvation descended, became incarnate, and was made man; suffered, rose again the third day, and ascended into the heavens, and will come again to judge the living and the dead. [We] also [believe] in the Holy Spirit. But the holy catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes those who say: "There was when He was not," and: "He was not before He was begotten," and: "He was made from that which did not exist," and those who assert that He is of other substance or essence, than the Father, or that He was created, or is susceptible of change."

This is the agreement of faith assented to at the great Council of Nicaea. It is true that nearly a hundred years of actual fighting continued, that changes were made, portions omitted, and others added; but the *homoousion* had carried the day. Notice the abruptness of form, which indicates that the framers of that original Nicene Creed desired not to go a hair's breadth beyond what was needed for the special occasion.

The creed had undoubtedly been submitted to Constantine in private, and when it was ready to be read in public, he had already made up his mind and determined that this confession was to

stand, and all those unwilling to adopt it were to be treated as men who resisted his own imperial will and law.

As the Nicene Creed was the first deliberate embodiment and formulation of the chief articles of our Christian faith, so the signatures at Nicaea were the first example of subscription to such a confession of faith. Hosius, of Cordova, heads the list; he was followed by the Bishop of Rome, represented by his two presbyters.

But the main question was whether those would be willing to subscribe who had favored the adoption of the creed formulated by Eusebius, without the *homouousion;* whether they were willing to adopt it with the changes and additions made. It is impossible at this late day to make even a fairly safe guess to what extent these members were Arians at heart, or how much they were scandalized by an odious expression which they were expected to adopt. There was some hesitation. Eusebius asked to be given a day to consider what course he would take. His request was granted. He determined to consult the mind of the composer. That was easy enough. It was the emperor, his master. When Constantine explained the word "as not indicating corporeal affections or properties, and, consequently, that the Son did not subsist from the Father either by division or abscission," he adopted the test without fear, vindicating his adoption with a beautiful letter to his diocese.

The other Eusebius, however, was not so accommodating. Like a few others he had committed himself too deeply to Arius and to the condemnation of the test. In his difficulty he did not consult the emperor, but the emperor's sister, one wiser than he. She did not have to be suspected of Arianism; she *was* an Arian. But she advised her favorite to comply, not — and here we have the seed of all future discord — for conscience' sake, but in order not to protract the controversy and to drive her brother back to paganism in disgust. But there is one thing which Eusebius would not do — he refused to sign the anathemas, "not as though objecting to the creed, but as disbelieving the party accused to be such as represented, having been satisfied on this point, both from his letters to us and from personal conversation."

But this partial assent did not satisfy the emperor. Eusebius was banished, — only to be recalled shortly afterwards and embedded in the favor of the Constantine family more strongly than ever before. According to some accounts it seems that he was banished and recalled before the council had even come to a close. There remained the extreme section of the Arian party: Arius,

though no bishop, Theonas, Bishop of Marmarica, and Secundus of Ptolemais, mentioned in the *Letter of the Synod,* Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, and Euzoius, associated with Arius. The last-mentioned was destined to do much harm in the Church. He was also the bishop who baptized Constantine on his deathbed. But in the rapid turn of events it seems that all the banished bishops were recalled, if not reinstated in their respective sees, upon a declaration of their faith and subscription to the *homoousion,* even before the close of the council.

Two main questions remained for the council, which now are almost forgotten. The first was the settling of the date of Easter. The Eastern Church had clung to the historical, Jewish, tradition. The council, however, decided not to celebrate Easter on the 14th of Nisan, but to adopt the Western custom, that is, to let Easter fall on the following Sunday. The mathematical calculations were left to the see with the most learned tradition, that is, to the bishops of Alexandria. The next question was the Melitian schism, not so much a question of doctrine as a question of the treatment of those who had "lapsed" during the time of persecutions and were willing to return. The council took a lenient, sensible, and level-headed stand. And as regards the intolerant Melitius, it was decided that he "should remain in office, but exercise no authority to ordain or to nominate for ordination," making preparation for the party in time to die a natural death. Besides this, a number of other decisions were made which cannot interest us here.

And now for a little celebration. The twentieth anniversary of Constantine's accession to the throne had come. The 25th of July was appointed by the emperor for a solemn banquet to the assembled bishops. "Not one was missing!" The sight exceeded all expectations." It might have been," says Eusebius, "the likeness of the kingdom of Christ rather than a waking reality." After this celebration the prelates returned as they had come, at public expense. So ended the great Council of Nicaea, the council of the 318!

The Council of Nicaea, it is true, offended against the principle of the separation of Church and State. It reminds us that peace is not established merely by oaths, subscriptions, and resolutions. And still we rejoice that with the *homoousion* it branded, stigmatized, marked, and condemned heresy and stood out for the absolute, undiluted, and unbound divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

The 1926 Triennial Convention of the Missouri Synod, which assembled in St. Louis, Mo., this year from the 9th to the 18th of June, was a notable gathering, having been attended by more members of Synod than any previous synodical meeting. The outstanding event was the dedication of the new buildings of Concordia Seminary on a beautiful site adjoining and overlooking the city, west of Forest Park. It is estimated that about 50,000 people took part in the simple, but impressive ceremonies. At the synodical sessions, which were presided over by the venerable President of Synod, Dr. F. Pfotenhauer, assisted by the vice-presidents, Dr. F. Pieper, the President of Concordia Seminary, read an essay on "The Christian Religion in Its Relation to All Other Religions," and Dr. W. H. T. Dau, until now managing editor of the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, presented a paper on the position we should assign to science in our thinking ("The Pursuit of Sciences which God Approves"). Both papers were gratefully received. Synod gave much attention to its institutions for the education of ministers and teachers, to the training these workers are to receive, and to its Christian day-schools. Nor was Sunday-school work overlooked. Quite important was the adoption of resolutions in which Synod reaffirmed its well-known position over against the lodge evil. It ordered the appointment of a committee which is to deliberate on the attainment of greater uniformity in lodge practise. The Intersynodical Committee was instructed to continue its work. Missions and church extension were discussed at length and with enthusiasm and were voted large appropriations. May God grant wisdom and strength to the members of Synod, so that the important resolutions adopted for the extension of His kingdom can be carried out! — Shortly before Synod convened, in connection with the closing exercises of Concordia Seminary, the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa,* was conferred, by the Faculty of the Seminary, on the following brethren: Pastor W. Dallmann, of Milwaukee, and Professors Th. Engelder and L. Wessel, of Springfield.

ARNDT.

American Preaching. — Ozora S. Davis, of the Chicago Theological Seminary, in a lengthy article published in the *Journal of Religion,* sets forth what to him seem the outstanding characteristics of the American Protestant pulpit in the first quarter of this century. Naturally, he is thinking chiefly of preachers belonging to denominations of the Reformed type. As to the length of sermons, he notes that the preacher to-day must "limit himself to half an hour and probably less for the sermon; he must study and achieve compactness and energy; he must 'put it across' quickly and accurately." In respect to the delivery he holds that there is a "remarkable change" from the "oratorical to the conversational style." He finds, furthermore, that the modern sermon shows "freedom from the technical terms of theology" and uses "the vivid and energetic vocabulary of the actual world." This last remark may be true touching sectarian

pulpits; we hope it does not apply to our Lutheran sermons, but that with us the preacher's aim still is to indoctrinate his hearers, which implies that such terms as justification, regeneration, predestination, etc., are used and explained. — Dr. Davis finds the greatest changes of all in the materials used in the sermons to-day. "Dogmatic fetters have been broken, life is looked at directly." The preacher is no longer concerned with soundness of doctrine, but rather concentrates on "the actual experience of living men and women." Alas! this is true of the circles which Dr. Davis has in mind. Objective, revealed truth is considered almost a nonentity. While our author admits that the chief Bible doctrines are still preached in Fundamentalist circles, he writes: "The following doctrines are in constant evidence: The reality and reasonableness of religion; a Christlike God, not so much the transcendent Sovereign as 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'; the redemptive power of sacrificial love, evident and potent in the death of Christ, a fact which is greater and more vital than any or all explanations of it; the interpretation of the Christian experience in the terms of moral union with Christ; therefore a tendency to renew the meaning of Paul's 'in Christ' and to accent the mystical rather than the dogmatic or institutional phases of the Christian religion; the representation of the Christian religion as 'a way of living according to the principles of Jesus and in fellowship with Him'; therefore a major accent upon the central reality of the living Christ; intense moral passion concerning the practical matters of daily life; yearning for social justice and the realization of the kingdom of God; international sympathy and passion." The author states conditions correctly. In the American pulpit, especially where it is tinged with Modernism, the attempt is manifest to avoid concrete, primary, fundamental doctrines and to go grazing in the field of general moral truth, of ethical axioms, of feeling and social endeavor. — Other points touched on by Dr. Davis are: that the preacher nowadays conceives of his task as teaching, in which connection he makes the interesting statement that "the day-school of religious education seems to be growing in favor"; that there is an "increasing concern for the social applications of the Gospel"; that sermons are being preached to children quite frequently nowadays; that sermons on a book or a piece of literature and on great characters in history, especially Bible history, are gaining in popularity; that world peace is being advocated in the sermons of the American clergy, and that "the transmission of sermons over the radio is an important new factor in this field." Looking at the survey of the situation as given by Dr. Davis, we have to say that lovers of the old Gospel find what they prize most highly is being excluded more and more from the Reformed pulpits in America. ARNDT.

"The Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ as King." — Under the title "Lutherans Will Not be Caught with the Pope's Bait" the *Lutheran Church Herald* of April 6 presents the recent resolutions of the "National Lutheran Council" in reference to the Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XI issued December 11, 1925. This letter in-

stitutes a "Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ as King," to be celebrated on the last Sunday of the month of October every year, and "commands also that on that day each year be renewed the dedication of the human race to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus which our predecessor, Pius X, of holy memory, orders to be repeated each year." The resolution of the Lutheran Council states: "It would seem almost a sacrilege to speak any word except in approval of such a feast and such a dedication. All true Christians desire to see Christ honored as King and pray that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. And we would not utter a word of dissent were it not for certain statements in the encyclical which are not true, which are sectarian in the worst sense, and which are uncharitable; and were it not for a fact which is obviously designing and hostile to very large groups of Christians and to widely accepted views of Christian truth. The Pope does not express the truth . . . when he says that 'the Catholic Church' — meaning, of course, the Roman Catholic Church — 'is the kingdom of Christ on earth.' . . . There is no institution on earth, no person or order of persons, to whom we may point and say, 'Here behold the kingdom of Christ.' . . . Wheresoever the Spirit of God is and works through the means of grace, leading men to faith in Christ, there is the kingdom of Christ. To accept and celebrate this Feast of Christ as King in the very spirit of the encyclical is at least tacitly to acknowledge all of the pretensions of the Pope to temporal and universal sovereignty as Christ's vicar. . . . The Pope makes himself the head and leader of the most sectarian of all the sects and acts very uncharitably. The designing spirit and hostile purpose of the Pope are unmistakably visible in the choice of the day upon which, every year, the feast is to be celebrated. . . . We may not say that the Pope is not sincere in his expressed desire to see Jesus Christ universally recognized as King over all people and things on earth; but there can be no doubt that he thinks, and perhaps sincerely, that the best way to bring this about is to counteract, as far as possible, the Reformation and the liberating truths of the Gospel which it restored to men. . . . What a master-stroke it would be if His Holiness could set up a festival that would be enthusiastically celebrated with 'manifold ceremonies of veneration,' not only by Catholics, but also by great multitudes of Christians calling themselves Protestants! But we at least will not be caught. . . . May we not commend to the consideration of all Protestants the question whether they will not more certainly honor Christ as their Savior and King by faithfully adhering to the truth of the Gospel and conforming their lives thereto than by joining in the celebration of a mighty festival marked by 'magnificent processions' and outward 'ceremonies'?" MUELLER.

Is the Expositor's Greek Testament Altogether Reliable? — In the April number of the current volume of the *Review and Expositor* appears a good article on "The Watering of Luke." The writer, Prof. P. W. Crannell, of Kansas City, Kans., takes Dr. Bruce, who furnished the exposition of the Gospel according to St. Luke in the *Expositor's Greek Testament,* to task and shows that the hyper-

critical and damaging conclusions of this scholar are untenable. We are accustomed to look upon the *Expositor's Greek Testament* as a conservative commentary, and, relatively speaking, it deserves to be classed as such. But it is surprising to what an extent negative criticism has been permitted to determine and to color the views presented in this far-famed work. Professor Crannell, in speaking of Bruce's treatment of St. Luke, complains of "his too frequent surrenders to the enemy," his "very free handling of the inspired writers," of "his seeming air of conscious superiority toward Luke in particular," and of such ire-stirring phrases as, "Luke has toned this down," "watered this down," and the like. The following paragraphs summarize quite well the objectionable elements in Bruce's comments and the line of thought pursued in Dr. Crannell's critical article: —

"What revolts the Bible student is Bruce's freedom of handling of Luke, his representation of Luke's freedom of handling the Gospel-facts, and the character of the disciples and of Jesus, his insistence on the overstrong influence of the subjective in Luke's writings, his theory of Luke's being enveloped in the magnifying, partly misleading, fog of the second-generation Christian hope and feeling. It is too much like the discrediting of John's gospel on the ground of its representing late views of Christ and not being the original, clear-cut conception of the Master gained in his lifetime by the eye-witness.

"A full treatment of our question should lead us into a thoroughgoing inquiry, first, as to what foundation there is for supposing that Luke's time of writing was such that he would see Christ through the nimbus of second-generation Christianity; secondly, as to what other writings, indubitably late in the century, do yield in the way of softened treatment and idealization; and thirdly and principally, does an actual study of Luke, in comparison with the others, reveal such a softened and haloed treatment? This article can, of course, do little more than hint at the outlines of such a study."

The purpose of this little notice is mainly to emphasize that as one approaches the *Expositor's Greek Testament,* the warning *cave!* is in place. ARNDT.

What Is the Baptist Church? — This question has been agitating the Baptist Church as a whole for some time, chiefly because of dissension within the ranks, and the formal statement was to be agreed on at the Northern Baptist Convention, which met in Washington May 25—30. This group was to endeavor to define the Baptist Church as one "accepting the New Testament as its guide and composed only of baptized believers, baptism being by immersion." The difficulty in the whole matter, as stated by Elmer William Powell in the *Christian Century* of April 8, is that "Baptists have no machinery for making definitions, and churches vary in doctrine and practise through the centuries." The local church is regarded as independent and self-governing. Churches are united in conventions as missionary bodies, which at times endeavor to enforce a formulized creed, as the Northern Baptist Convention was to try to do. Mr. Powell states that to define the Baptist Church by the above-mentioned

definition, "as the Fundamentalists now prefer shall be done," "would break faith with the Free Baptists with their open membership churches and lead directly into the courts." The writer quotes Rev. F. M. Goodchild as stating, during attempts to merge Baptists and Free Baptists, in 1907: "We should demonstrate in our union that liberty promotes unity. The basis of union could not be creedal. . . . The Lord Jesus alone must be the object of our united allegiance. His New Testament must be our sole confession of faith." Then Mr. Powell laments the fact that Dr. Goodchild has become president of the Baptist Fundamentalists. "The attempt to define a Baptist church is for the purpose of excluding the Park Avenue Baptist Church, and this simply means Fosdick," is Mr. Powell's criticism, and he defends his disapproval: "The Park Avenue Church is following the line of Baptist faith and in the area of the Northern Baptist Convention there are hundreds of churches which now practise open membership, and hundreds of others will do so. . . . As a matter of fact the younger men in the ministry are moving toward open membership" — Communion or Baptism according to the dictates of the individual conscience — "and carry forward our Baptist genius. They are the true sons who insist on the 'faith of our fathers.'" The picture of a Church which is unable to exclude from its pastorate an out-and-out Modernist of Fosdick's type and which, on the other hand, cannot even defend its muddled confessional standpoint, is indeed a sorry one. MUELLER.

The Minister and Books. — The *Watchman-Examiner* of April 8 quotes Dr. A. T. Robertson on this subject: "The pulpit has not been dethroned by the press, but the press challenges the pulpit to do its best. A pastor cannot remain indifferent to the reading habits of his people. What they read will help or hinder what he preaches. It is a perilous thing for the young or the unskilled to read only one-sided presentations of new 'isms' and fads before they know enough to answer the follies and fancies of idle dreamers. The pastor's sermon's should bear some relation to the reading of his people. Too often pastor and people live in different intellectual worlds. He does not know what they are reading and what they are thinking about. They do not understand what he is preaching about. The preacher should stimulate people to read good books rather than denounce bad books, which usually simply advertises them. In rural communities in particular a pastor has a great opportunity as a guide of the people. If there is no public library in the community, it will richly pay the church to have one and to fill it with good and great books that will enlarge the horizon and enrich the life of the people."

MUELLER.

Playing with Sacred Things. — What trifling argumentation is often resorted to when serious questions are to be decided was shown at the Presbyterian convention in Baltimore, when Dr. Macartney, of Chicago, opposed his brother, Dr. Macartney of Philadelphia, the latter of whom is a staunch Fundamentalist. The matter under discussion was that section of a report which dealt with the New York Presbytery and which, in the opinion of the Philadelphia Macartney,

was not satisfactory. The newspapers reported the address of the Chicago Macartney as follows: "Rev. Albert Macartney, addressing the assembly, and 'Brother Clarence' pleaded for peace and conciliation in a brief talk which many assemblymen called the most touching of the convention. 'Brother Clarence is all right,' he said. 'The only trouble with him is that he is not married. If he were, he wouldn't have so much time to worry over other people's theology. After years of ministering to a church, including thirty-five denominations, I am for the report from cover to cover; not so much for what it says as for its purpose and objects.' Recalling his childhood, he said: 'Mother used to sing to us our favorite hymns each night. For me she sang "Rock of Ages," and for Clarence she sang "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood." We didn't know what that meant then, but it made for us the Christianity we then possessed, and were it possible for mother to return, we'd find our way to our old home in West Pennsylvania, and there'd be room for us to kneel and sing those hymns; and I believe there is room for us to kneel beside our great mother, the Presbyterian Church, in great loyalty to Jesus Christ.' The speech was ended among the most prolonged applause during the assembly."

Is it thus that great issues are met? ARNDT.

A Preacher's Modern Temptations. — Modern temptations confronting the preacher, according to Elmer E. Conrath, writing in the April 15 issue of the *Watchman-Examiner,* are "akin to that which faced our Lord when the devil took Him up on a high mountain and promised Him the whole world if He would do certain things." The first type of temptation is that on the road to distinction. In former times, according to Mr. Conrath, distinctions came through faithful cure of souls, sound preaching of doctrine, and striving for uprightness in the community. "But in these modern days, in the ministry as elsewhere, there are short cuts, if not to glory, at least to notoriety and certainty of getting in the public eye for a day or two. The preacher who thirsts for fame has two courses open to him. One is to attack the Bible." The writer shows that this procedure effects "a big house — for a few sermons at least." "But it soon fails; it is the path of lesser ability; for 'the sort of ability that could get only an ordinary hearing for a sermon on John 3, 16 and could not even begin to do justice to that piece of Scripture gets a three-column streamer to the effect that 'Dr. Dingus Declares the Bible is Out of Date.'" The other method of gaining notoriety listed by Mr. Conrath is by proceeding "to deliver a sermon, or issuing a statement, to the effect that prohibition is a failure. . . ." Though Mr. Conrath seems to make quite a point of the fact that the latter proceeding is rather against the practise of the Church than of the ministry, yet he is right in denouncing the pastor who degrades the pulpit into an organ of disreputable sensationalism. MUELLER.

Religion and Prosperity. — Roger W. Babson, the noted business expert and statistician, recently expressed the opinion that religion is at the foundation of prosperity. Statistics show that all worth-

while things in the world — I include inventions, industries, railroads, public utilities — originate with a very small group of people. Statistics further show that ninety per cent. of this small group owe their vision, faith, and courage to a praying father or a praying mother.... The real security for property and legitimate investments rests upon the religion of the nation. The value of our stocks, bonds, deeds, and mortgages lies with the motives of the people. With fifty-one per cent. of the people honest and having at heart the good of the commonwealth, our legitimate property and investments are safe.... The real safeguards of your savings are not the banks, but the churches." As the quoting editorial states: "It is a healthy sign when men who could hardly speak with authority on the subject of religion realize that religion — and especially the Christian religion, whose teachings they cannot but admire — is the need of the hour if business and industry are ever to be rescued from the selfish, mercenary, and inhuman spirit which is making havoc with the Golden Rule." If Babson and others could realize the true way by which Christianity works for good in the community and state, then their commendation would be even more emphatic. MUELLER.

On "Hearing the Other Side." — The *Homiletic Review* for June, 1926, contains an editorial on the old Latin maxim, *Audi alteram partem.* The principle is good enough, but the application made of it there is not satisfactory. The reader may judge for himself, as the article is reprinted herewith: —

"The caption of this editorial is a fundamental principle in court procedure, both civil and criminal. But outside the restricted field of jurisprudence, to 'hear the other side' is as vital to ascertainment of truth as it is to the spirit of fairness. Indeed, at the moment we cannot conceive a section in the whole area of human action and thought where it should not apply. The researcher in physical science who thinks he has discovered a new chemical element (such as illinium, the latest addition to known elements) is not satisfied with positive evidence in the presence of certain lines in the spectrum; he searches for negative testimony. Is there any other known substance, he asks, which under the conditions may give the same lines? "The other side!" The way to the conquest of yellow fever was discovered in similar fashion. Patients bitten by a certain species of mosquito contracted the fever; those carefully guarded from bites escaped the infection. Again, the other side! And so it is always in such scientific research as permits the acid and impartial test of agreement and difference.

"In view of this habit, this inflexible rule, or method, in science, is it not a bit strange that in matters religious, theological, or political many not only do not seek to know 'the other side,' but even grow angry at the mere expression of an opinion not their own? They seem never to have prayed the prayer: Lord, make it possible for me to apprehend that I can be mistaken. The indirect suggestion of such a possibility discovered in the statement of a position other than their own acts as incitement to passion and challenge to combat.

They do not so much want to be right as to be left in the comfort of self-assurance undisturbed by suggestion of doubt of the correctness of their conclusions. Hence, on the one hand, they read what they like, believe, and hold, and, on the other, eschew all else. A Republican paper or (not *and*) one Democratic, a Fundamentalist magazine or (not *and*) one that is Modernist, is all-sufficient. And so, unconsciously, but inevitably, they become intellectually asymmetrical, dwarfed, gnarled, misshapen, intolerant, and often intolerable. They know not the serenity of mental poise, the equability of a mind established in the truth by seeing it from all angles.

"Among the worst of the sequelae of this habit of mind is the weakening of moral fiber resulting from the absence of that best of disciplines, self-discipline. When a minister says (as one has said), I can't read on evolution because it would 'upset my theory of Old Testament symbolism,' or (as another said), 'I dare not read Biblical Introduction because I might have to reconstruct my theory of the Bible,' both display a laxity of moral resolve and a fearfulness of fact which are fatal to leadership. The timid never 'lead' either a forlorn hope or a victorious assault.

"Facts are God's finger-posts. Who ignores them may wander far in the slough of the unverified."

To hear the other side is fair. But no one ought to demand that after you have heard the other side and have acquainted yourself with the arguments produced and have recognized them as false, you should continue listening to that side just as though you had not taken a stand in the controversy. Such an attitude would befit skepticism, but would not be in keeping with that joyous faith which has found in Christ the realization of its highest hopes and wishes. Some people are always doubting. They seem intensely interested in digging up difficulties. It has been well said that they are like the man who, having climbed up a tree, is trying to saw off the branch on which he is sitting. In such a case it is no longer the *Audi alteram partem* principle which is dictating the action, but unbelief.

ARNDT.

The Bible in the Public Schools. — Another expression on this topic, brought forth by the proposed bill in Virginia compelling the reading of the Bible in the public schools, is quoted by the *Baptist* of April 10, from the *Religious Herald* of the Virginia Baptists: "We would encourage the reading of the Bible in every way open to us — in the home, in the church, by the way, everywhere and in all possible and suitable conditions. But Baptists will never consent to have the state exercise authority in matters of religion. They are bound to protest when any such effort is made. They know what their forefathers suffered and endured. They know that they have entered into their heritage of religious liberty in this State through the toil and suffering of others. Hence the day is probably far distant when Virginia Baptists will acquiesce in any proposal to turn over to the Commonwealth any authority in the realm of religion."

MUELLER.

The True Nature of Modernism Becoming Known. — The *Watchman-Examiner* carries a Fundamentalist's page, in which the following interesting item recently appeared: —

"A few years ago the Fundamentalists were kicked and scoffed at, and the Modernists were hailed as the prophets of a new age. Things have changed a bit. The newspapers do not sneer at Fundamentalists as they did. In denominational councils their opinions are asked. The Modernists are having their turn in being ballywhacked. Even their one-time friends are turning against them. We remember that after the Buffalo convention the *Christian Register,* the organ of the Unitarians, issued an 'All hail' to the 'Unitarians' of the Northern Baptist convention. It has no kind words to say now of the Modernists among us, whom it greeted fraternally then. It does not honor them by the name Modernists. It calls them Institutionalists, following the lead of Prof. Kirsopp Lake. It approves Prof. W. T. Waugh's words that for Unitarians to make terms with them is 'treating with the enemy.' It says with Herbert Croly in the *New Republic* that their influence is 'chiefly on the reactionary side.' It declares that, 'although many of them pride themselves on being liberal, their Liberalism consists largely in applying to religion the compromising technique of opportunist politics.' Then it proceeds to castigate the whole group by saying: 'The Modernist is the man in the creedal orthodox churches who wants peace and not division. He says that theology is unnecessary and that unity is everything. He does not plead for truth, but only for fellowship. He says that Fundamentalist and Modernist can live and work together, and if they cannot seek the truth and think together, why should they think anyhow? It is not necessary. Religion is not a matter of thought, of doctrine. Religion is a way of life.' And then the *Register* pronounces the judgment: 'The Institutionalist (Modernist) is a compromiser, as the Fundamentalist is not.' All this is not a Fundamentalist's description of a Modernist. But apter, truer words could not be chosen. As the Modernist reads them, he will feel the truth of Dean Brown's words: 'It is just as easy to be opinionated and disagreeable on the liberal side of the fence as it is on the conservative side.'" ARNDT.

A Nut for the Evolutionists to Crack. — The *Presbyterian* some time ago printed the following facetious little article, which originally appeared in a Kansas paper and which has not lost any of its attractiveness by doing extensive traveling: —

"Scientists have discovered that the humble, but very much despised cockroach ranks first in antiquity among all the creatures of the earth. And in making this discovery, the same scientists have been 'hoist by their own petard,' as the old-time country editor would say, for the reason that the present-day cockroach shows no change whatever from his ancestors of two hundred thousand years ago. If there is anything in this talk of evolutionists that creatures are ever changing, such, for instance, as ape into man, why is it that the cockroach has not changed? When confronted with this question,

Tom McNeal, editor of the *Kansas Farmer* and an evolutionist of the first water, dismissed it, as most scientists do, with the query: 'Who would want to evolute from the cockroach anyway?' Another scientist replied that the cockroach attained millions of years ago so perfect an adjustment to nature that no alteration was necessary. But this explanation is rather far-fetched because the cockroach had no cupboards, pantries, or ice-boxes to get into millions of years ago. Certainly there is just as much reason for a cockroach to change its form and habits to overcome the modern barriers to its food supply as for an ape to quit hanging by his tail when the cocoanuts ran out and begin working in a garden for his food supply. It will be hard for the evolutionists to convince all the people that man descended from the monkey until they clear up this cockroach business."

ARNDT.

Is Modern Geology Reliable? — Dr. Bartoli, who is considered one of the eminent scientific men of Italy to-day, has written a book entitled, *The Biblical Story of Creation,* in which, according to the *Sunday-school Times,* the following appraisal of present-day geology is found: —

"Geology is hardly a science at all. It tries empirically to say something about the formation of the earth's crust, but sound reasoning and the certain data from experiments forbid us to lay down any theory as certain and definite. Geology is a science in the making, a science of the future, not certainly a science to-day. Its three principal theories as to the origin of rocks, plutonism, neptunism, and vulcanism, have ended in skepticism. Theories follow one another in quick succession and satisfy no one. Not a day passes that does not see new hypotheses, new schemes, new plans, new tabulated results, as to the formation of the earth; in reality there is a babel of tongues and nothing more. If any reader doubts this assertion, let him consult books on geology, and he will undeceive himself.

"Must we wonder at all this? By no means. Geologists have undertaken an impossible task. Looking upon an immense globe of ruins and broken fragments, they want to tell us how the first fabric of the earth rose and came into being. A vain labor, a useless effort! They will never succeed in their endeavors. If, however, laying aside their preconceived ideas of evolution, they accept the Bible's account of the reconstruction [?] of the earth, they will have light in the darkness by which they are surrounded. The internal structure of the earth will not appear, then, as mysterious as now." ARNDT.

The Bross Prize. — The late William Bross left to the trustees of Lake Forest University a sum of $40,000, from the proceeds of which every ten years a prize of $6,000 is awarded for the best book fulfilling the conditions of the deed of trust, the objects of which are "to call out the best efforts of the highest talent and the ripest scholarship of the world, to illustrate from science or any department of knowledge, and to demonstrate the divine origin and authority of

the Christian Scriptures; and, further, to show how both science and revelation coincide and to prove the existence, the providence, or any or all of the attributes of the one living and true God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." The latest award is made to Douglas Clyde Macintosh, Dwight Professor of Theology in Yale University, for his book *The Reasonableness of Christianity.* The *Presbyterian* (Jan. 7, 1926) bluntly states: "A candid examination of it will convince any intelligent reader that it would have been more accurately named if he had called it 'The Unreasonableness of Christianity,' provided the word Christianity be taken in its historical meaning as designating the religion established by Jesus Christ and His apostles and believed on by the Church of all ages." One of the author's keynotes is: "All that has been said of the reasonableness and truth of Christianity is demonstrably valid whether we have any Christology or not and whatever we may or may not believe about the historic Jesus. It would still be valid if it should turn out that Jesus was essentially different from what has been commonly believed, or even that He was not truly historical at all." The *Presbyterian* comments: "In extracting from historical Christianity what he calls the essence of Christianity, Professor Macintosh proceeds on the assumption that nothing that is irrational or immoral can belong to the essence of Christianity. The significance of this procedure appears when it is perceived that, in his judgment, everything of the nature of the miraculous is irrational and that the thought of salvation through the expiatory death of another is immoral. . . . He is able to write thus concerning that which the Christians of all ages have regarded, and rightly, as the very heart of Christianity: 'Much less is it reasonable to suppose that the divine justice was satisfied by Jesus' vicarious suffering on the cross, viewed as a substitutionary punishment of the sinner's sin. Any such notion is not only not a part of the essence of Christianity; it is essential to the well-being of Christianity that it be eliminated from the Christian's belief.' Surely we need say no more to make clear that the Bross Prize volume of 1925 is definitely and polemically antichristian." The judges who awarded the prize were Drs. Kerr and MacIntosh, of a Presbyterian church in Pittsburgh and McCormick Theological Seminary, respectively, and Dean Shailer Mathews of the Chicago University Divinity School. The quoted issue of the *Presbyterian* laments the judgment of at least the Presbyterian ministers. MUELLER.

American Illiteracy. — One of the motives which prompts more school and compulsory education laws is seen in the results of the 1920 census, which revealed that there were at that time 4,931,905 people in the United States who could neither read nor write; and of the army tests, which proved that there was a practical illiteracy of 24.9 per cent. The question remains whether compulsory school legislation, and especially the pernicious type prohibiting parochial schools, is the answer to the problem. MUELLER.

"The Movies for Morons." — The editorial comment of the February issue of the *Catholic World* brings some interesting thoughts on the movies: "Every one criticizes the 'movies.' Yet every one seems to continue to go to them. I hear of no one who resolves — and keeps his resolution — not to go. The truth is that the moving pictures have become indispensable. At their best they are wonderful; at their worst they are unspeakable. That is to say, they are like books and paintings and music and people. There is the point — they are like the people. Critics, especially critics who have intelligence, are apt to forget what the people are like. The intellectuals object to the moving pictures as an insult to the intelligence of the public. They forget that it is difficult, indeed, practically impossible, to insult the intelligence of the public. Of course, we have had public schools and parochial schools for many generations. And we have hundreds of colleges, annually flooding the country with presumably intelligent graduates. But the dismal fact remains that the 'public' as such is almost inconceivably dull-witted. One proof of that fact is that the public does not rise up and hoot most of the pictures off the screen. . . . The truth is the public doesn't recognize the insipidity and the asininity of most of the pictures. That is to say, the public is moronesque, if not exactly moron. . . . Moron . . . means simply one whose mental level is that of a normal child of eight or twelve years." MUELLER.

A Reformation Day in India. — Missionary Blaess, of Ambur, India, reports a combined service of the native congregations in Ambur and vicinity in the *Australian Lutheran* of January 20, 1926. Preliminary work was the distribution of about 800 programs, containing an order of the services to be held and a translation of *What the Lutheran Church Stands For* by Prof. Th. Graebner, the posting of placards with sentence sermons in Tamil and English, with Bible-passages, in prominent places of the town, and information given by the Christians when questioned regarding the material. The festival was celebrated on November 1. It opened with a service in the morning, attended by 500 people from Ambur and some 25 villages surrounding. After the service the visitors were shown the mission-work at Ambur: the hospital, the girls' boarding-school, the high school, Cheri School, and other features. A meal of native dishes was served at 1 o'clock by the Ambur congregation. At 3.30 P. M., the boys of the boarding-school staged a parade, carrying a banner and singing songs, returning with a number of Hindus and Mohammedans in their wake. The evening service was marked by the substitution of the recitation in Tamil of the story of Luther's life in place of the sermon. After the service another meal was served, hymns and lyrics were sung, and fireworks displayed. The report also presents some interesting information concerning the Gospel Training-station at Ambur, which is designed to train men for the position of teachers and Gospel-workers. The first class finished April, 1925; six members of this class are in active work, and the

seventh is studying in Nagercoil Seminary. The second class, consisting of eight men, will finish April, 1926. Due to accidents and illness among the members of the faculty of this school, the work at the time of writing was in the hands of Missionaries Blaess and Noffke — an arduous task alongside of mission-work. The missionaries are filled with zeal for the work, but complain of the shortage of men in the field and plead for reinforcements. Their call deserves an answer. MUELLER.

Denominationalism in the Foreign Field. — Is there any one that has at any time bestowed a modicum of thought on the extension of Christianity in heathen countries to whom the division of the Church into many opposing denominations has not appeared a very formidable hindrance? Modernistic mission boards are endeavoring to evolve a Christianity which will not be hampered by distinctive beliefs and form the basis for one great national Christian Church in China, in India, etc. That a Christianity having a basis so broad that the Unitarians, the Methodists, and the Lutherans can stand on it is no longer real Christianity is, of course, a truth hidden from such promoters. Dr. W. O. Carver, Professor of Missions in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, writes touching this matter in the *Review and Expositor* (April, 1926): "However much and however honestly we deplore Western denominationalism, is it, after all, quite so serious a hindrance to the acceptance of Christianity in missionary countries as we sometimes imagine? One recalls having heard the late Bishop Thoburn say that he had never known an Indian to raise this objection unless it had been suggested to him by some foreigner. With more than forty denominations of Buddhism in Japan, with a considerable number of them in China, with various local cults in every community, is the human mind in China so desperately confused by various interpretations of a new faith? It is not at all argued that our Western denominations should be perpetuated in China; it is suggested that doctrinaire theories, proposed and promoted by foreigners, may be much more largely responsible for the hindrance in the Chinese mind than has properly been taken account of. Until we are ready and able to transcend our denominationalism in the West, we cannot hope to conceal it from the non-Christian world or from the newer churches in China, and the effort to do so might suggest something of insincerity rather than afford a winning appeal in the missionary lands. It is hardly to be hoped that we shall be able to overcome a past built up through many centuries by piously saying: 'Go to, let us build a simple, undivided, unhampered Christianity in China.' We shall probably have to solve our homeland and our foreign-land problem of Christian unity *pari passu.*" While a divided Church is certainly not in keeping with the will of God, there is something infinitely worse, be it at home or abroad, namely, the modern apostasy, which calls itself Christian, but has robbed Jesus of His divine glory and teaches salvation by works. ARNDT.

Glimpses from the Observer's Window. — According to the reports of the newspapers, the Fundamentalists did not win their battles at the recent conventions of the large Reformed church-bodies. The outcome seems to have been a draw. In civic life we applaud the man who says with Patrick Henry: "Give me liberty or give me death." When it comes to religion, people exhibit a strange readiness to be tyrannized or to have their sweetest convictions trampled on. The peace-at-any-price atmosphere seems to have prevailed at these gatherings.

The daily press informed us that the recent Presbyterian convention refused to confirm the appointment of the well-known Fundamentalist leader, Rev. Dr. Gresham Machen, to the Chair of Ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary. On one day we were told that this unfavorable action was "on the ground that Dr. Machen voted against a resolution offered in the New Brunswick Presbytery endorsing the Eighteenth Amendment and pledging the support of the Presbytery to the Volstead Act." On another day the public was informed that Dr. Machen was a man who cannot get along with people. Those who have met Dr. Machen personally will agree that he is a man of charming personality. The charge that he cannot get along with people seems to have no other foundation than his refusal to sanction anticonfessional teachings in his Church.

A newspaper advertisement paid for by a Catholic business man says: "Catholics believe the ordinary method of propagating Christianity is by preaching, not by writing or circulating the Bible. See Mark 16, 16: 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' Printing was not invented until the fifteenth century." Are we not here reminded of the opposition found in some quarters to the singing of the words of institution when the elements are consecrated in the Lord's Supper, an opposition based on this, that the Bible reports, "Christ said," and not, "Christ sang"? It is surprising that the author of the above Roman Catholic advertisement connives at the printing of any Bibles at all, since the prophets and apostles were told to "write" and not to "print." Enough said!

A St. Louis paper contained the following item: "The Young People's Department of St. Peter's Evangelical Church will hold its annual banquet and circus to-morrow night, with an address by Mayor Miller, at the church, St. Louis and Warne Avenues." We have been wondering what brand of "high jinks" was exhibited at that "circus." The very term in connection with church-work is utterly obnoxious.

Die Allgem. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung reports that at an intersynodical Lutheran conference in India representatives of the Ohio Synod refused to join the other Lutherans (for instance, the Leipzig people, the Swedes, and Merger representatives) in a Communion service because the common doctrinal basis was lacking. May God strengthen these men in opposing unscriptural unionism!

Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin has been chosen President of Union Theological Seminary, New York, and has accepted the call. Dr. Coffin, before this, was pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, which he served for twenty years. His predecessor, as head of Union Seminary, was the well-known church historian Dr. Arthur C. McGiffert, who relinquished the presidency on account of ill health. Both men mentioned are thoroughgoing Modernists.

The *Sunday-school Times*, several months ago, contained this interesting item on the origin of the American Indian: "The American Indian came from China. The Chinese came from the West and can easily be traced from the direction of Afghanistan, and from there the lines are still not altogether obliterated; we connect the language with that of the Euphrates Valley." In similar manner the lines of migration in the West all lead back toward the Euphrates Valley in Mesopotamia. As far as we know anything on this subject, the statement of Paul that "God made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" is absolutely scientific. ARNDT.

BOOK REVIEW.

Lutheran Fundamentals. By *G. H. Gerberding.* 1925. 321 pages, 5×7¼. $1.50. (Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill.)

Dr. Gerberding, now professor in Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary at Minneapolis, has written this volume of doctrinal discussions "with applications for the common man." It states, in the main adequately, the position of the Lutheran Church on the principal doctrines of Christianity. The author's peculiar views on Predestination pervade the fifth chapter, entitled "God's Work of Providence." Who can make anything of this (p. 99): "Foreknowledge does not bind or coerce. Foreordination does"? Of a real election in the sense of Eph. 1 and Rom. 8 nothing remains when the ten points which follow are accepted as "the New Testament teaching on Election." Also the statement (p. 189) that the Holy Ghost, through Baptism, "implants into the young soul these elements of the new life in embryo or germ form" is familiar to us from former books of the author. Who, we would ask, has ever "iterated and reiterated that man can do nothing at all toward his own salvation" and has left such statements "unexplained, unqualified"? (p. 209.) The trouble with Dr. Gerberding is that, as he explains and qualifies the statement, it becomes synergistic. That there should be no mention of Rome in connection with the discussion of Antichrist (p. 284 ff.) seems strange in a Lutheran text-book. On the millennium the author hedges, but he quotes for that doctrine texts which in their connection refer either to the New Testament Church or to heaven. Even in an elementary text one should expect something on the doctrine of the ministry, only incidentally referred to in *Lutheran Fundamentals.* Dr. Gerberding's gift of lucid presentation is in evidence throughout the book, and its various chapters betoken a wonderful preservation of the aged author's mental powers. The chapter on Sin is very fine. GRAEBNER.

Fundamental Christianity. By *Francis L. Patton,* ex-president of Princeton University and Princeton Theological Seminary. 330 pages, 7½×5. $2.25. (The Macmillan Co., New York.)

The contents of this book consist of five apologetic lectures delivered in 1924 at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va. These lectures here appear in a revised and enlarged form and represent President Patton's conservative views on inspiration, the deity of Christ, and salvation through faith in Him. Unfortunately, the author frequently makes unwarranted concessions, as, for example, over against Romanism. (p. 131.) He also avoids important issues on which there ought to be clear and unmistakable testimony, *e. g.*, in the treatment of the Person of Christ. (p. 204 ff.) Lastly, also the errors of Calvinism, of which the writer is an advocate, are apparent, although the trend of the book is irenical and unionistic. Of the five chapters, "The Theistic View of the World," "The Seat of Authority in Religion," "The New Christianity," "The Person of Christ," "The Pauline Theology," the first, with its keen analysis of the materialistic, pantheistic, and pluralistic tendencies of to-day, is perhaps the one from which the reader may profit most. The chapter on "The New Christianity" is a good refutation of Modernism. On the whole, the book is worthy of a close study. MUELLER.

Refuge and Strength. By *Otto Mees.* 206 pages, 7½×5. $1.00. (Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This is an excellent collection of seven-minute talks, delivered before the students of Capital University (Ohio) at their chapel exercises. The purpose of the addresses is "to awaken, or to keep alive, in the minds of the students the consciousness that, while intellectual growth is fostered, spiritual development must not be neglected." The subjects treated in the addresses are: "Life," "Habits," "Character Building," "Service," "God's Gifts," "Prayer," "Church," and "Christian Characteristics." They are models in form and contents and sound that definite note of faith and piety which has its source in true Christian obedience to God's Word. The busy pastor will find in these talks many valuable lessons also for his young people's societies. MUELLER.

The Holy Spirit in the Gospels. By *J. Ritchie Smith, D. D.* 374 pages and indices, 7½×5. $2.50. (The Macmillan Co., New York.)

Dr. J. Ritchie Smith, Professor of Homiletics in Princeton Theological Seminary, is the author of a number of works which in a most scholarly manner defend conservative Christian belief against modern rationalism. The present volume comprises a series of exegetical studies, in which every passage of the four gospels relating to the Holy Spirit is examined in order that its precise significance may be discovered. It is a *rara avis* among the many superficial books that now flood the market and commends itself not only because of its fine devout spirit, but also because of its exhaustiveness. While one may not always accept the author's opinions, we are ready to say that no interested reader will lay aside this book without having gained a good deal by its study. Dr. Smith has packed into the 374 pages of his book a remarkable wealth of historical and theological information. Scholarliness seems to be largely on the side of Fundamentalism. MUELLER.

Progressive Christianity. By *William A. Vrooman.* 368 pages and indices, 8×5½. $2.50. (The Macmillan Co., New York.)

In the bitter controversy now raging between Naturalism and Supernaturalism both sides are contributing liberally to the already heavily stocked market of religious books. William A. Vrooman represents the extreme liberal views of modern ultrarationalism, or, as it is called, "The New Reformation," which sweeps away all traditional doctrines of orthodox Christianity. *Audiatur et altera pars.* Those who desire to be acquainted with modern Liberalism will find in this book a complete program of what "progressive Christianity" stands for. MUELLER.

The Gospel Story in Art. By *John La Farge.* 417 pages, 9¼×7. $2.50. (The Macmillan Co., New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

That the sacred story of Christ's nativity, life, and Passion has been told almost completely in paintings that have achieved immortal fame is well known. However, these paintings have been very seldom grouped

together in such a way that the common reader can appreciate them; nor has the description of them always been sufficiently popular to suit the average mind. *The Gospel Story in Art* is an attempt to offer to the reader both the pictures of the great masters and a description of them that is not too technical. In fact, it is a rare pleasure to glance over the pages of this admirable book and, under the guidance of the renowned author, to study the eighty great paintings that illustrate Christ's life and death. The reader may not always agree with him, but he must acknowledge that, on the whole, his judgment is sound. The make-up of the book is excellent and the price remarkably low. We heartily recommend this fine work to all lovers of sacred art. MUELLER.

The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity. By *Captain Francis McCullach.* 1924. 401 pages, 8¾×5½. (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

There is one naive statement, and only one, in the book — the opening sentence of the author's preface. Having settled oneself down to the feast of horrors indicated by the title, a person is left a trifle short of wind when, turning to the opening sentence, he is informed: "The title of this book is to some extent misleading; for instead of dealing exhaustively with the persecution of Christians in which the government of Lenin has indulged during the last five years, I merely touch here on the fringe of that vast subject." Mr. McCullach does not explain how the very misleading title originated. If the firm were not as reputable a one as E. P. Dutton, one might be tempted to suggest that a book entitled, *The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity* sells vastly better than one entitled, *The Cieplak Trial.* Nevertheless, the author, who went to Russia as correspondent of the *New York Herald,* tells a thrilling story. He attended all the sittings of the Red Court which tried Archbishop Cieplak and his Roman Catholic clergy, and he notes down his impressions with microscopic detail and abundant quotations from Bolshevik documents. The correspondent's story has the ring of truth. GRAEBNER.

Cosmic Evolution. By *John Elof Boodin.* 1925. 484 pages, 8×5½. $3.50. (The Macmillan Co., New York.)

Dr. Boodin is Professor of Philosophy in Carleton College. He has written, during the past twenty years, various texts dealing with his peculiar type of the new realism. In this book he takes his stand outside the field of physical or biological investigation, but instead deals with evolution from the standpoint of such abstractions as Cosmic Levels, the Monad and Whole, and the Order of Nature. Boodin's Realism, as a matter of fact, is a "Cosmic Idealism," by which he endeavors to fight the materialistic tendencies of the day. He emphasizes the cosmic point of view as over against the earth point of view; yet the deity at which he arrives is certainly not the God of the Bible, neither of the New nor of the Old Testament, but, at best, the world-soul of ancient Greek speculation. There is an interesting chapter on the Einstein Theory and other theories of Relativity. GRAEBNER.